ISSN 0712-7774

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS

ACQUIRED TASTES

74
MAY

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N O T E • F R O M • T H E P R E S I D E N T

This issue qualifies as cruel and unusual punishment at best and assault and intent to injure at worst.

Why do you people keep doing this to yourselves? "Bring Jaka back! Bring Jaka back!" Oh well, they're your tear ducts.

Sincerest apologies to Bill Sienkiewicz whom I forgot to mention **anywhere** in Cerebus Jam #1.

My admiration for this man's work prompted me to render the cover of #39 in the Neal Adams style he was doing to perfection at that time in Moon Knight. I used a reverse Neal Adams signature parody on that cover.

The irony of doing a parody of Neal's signature as a tribute to Bill Sienciewicz escaped me at the time. This issue I stole Bill's own very distinctive signature for the cover as a tribute, not to his ability to do a faithful and spontaneous variation on a seminal influence (it makes sense, I think, read it again) but rather for his **own** role as a seminal influence for a new generation of comics professionals (and aspiring professionals). As probably the single greatest influence on my thinking at this juncture of our story-line (page fourteen of this issue is page 1500, by the way) such a tribute was long overdue. A brilliant, brilliant individual and my closest friend in the field (after Gerhard).

Speaking of whom, how abou those backgrounds? How about that cover colour? It's interesting that as I've been developing a more spontaneous line, Gerhard has been moving in the direction of more literal rendering of mass and shadow and light. His set design ability is quite evident in this issue, as well. Before he started each page, we ran through the "choreography" --- where Cerebus and Jaka were at the end of the previous page and each implied point of view in it's turn. So well did this little excercise work that Ger followed a couple of my quirky touches to the letter. At the bottom of page ten, I had Cerebus walking off at an impossible angle. I wanted to have him, figuratively, push the background out of his way to show the tension he was creating in the room. Ger did it that way without even thinking about it. At the bottom of page seventeen, I reversed the light source on Cerebus to show that what Jaka has just said to him was sinking in. She becomes his new light source. She illuminates his thinking. Hey, it's the way I think. I didn't say it was normal. Gerhard is adjusting to it quite nicely; which is good.

This one I'm really proud of; so's Ger. If you want the appropriate background music, may I suggest The Beatles **Twist and Shout** album (I think it's called something else in the States -- it's the one with Anna, Chains, Please Please Me, Do You Want to know a Secret.)

Oh and please watch this space for word on a comic book benefit for Ethiopian famine relief which should be out in the fall, organized by Martin Skidmore over 'ome. Judge Dredd, the Spirit, Cerebus and many other stories are being donated. If each of you buys about a dozen, we'll have sales of a quarter mifion. Think about it.

Tears really aren't enough.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

JUNE 9TH
OTTAWA COMIC & CARD SHOW
Ottawa Congress Centre,
Ottawa, Ontario (613) 722-8153

JUNE 22, 23
HEROES CONVENTION '85
Marriott City Centre
100 West Trade St., Charlotte, N.C.
704-375-7642

JUNE 30TH (Dave & Gerhard)
AMERICON
LeBaron Hotel
1350 N First Street, San Jose, CA.,
(408) 279-8070

JULY 5, 6, 7

JULY 5, 6, 7
DALLAS FANTASY FAIR
Ramada Hotel
1055 Regal Row, Dallas, TX

JULY 19, 20, 21 (Dave & Gerhard)
MAPLECON 7
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

AUGUST 10TH
HOUSE OF FANTASY
1709 Pine Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY.,
(716) 282-8838 (11 to 7)

AUGUST 31ST
THE WAYNE COMIC CON
Wayne Holiday Inn
Service Road, Route 46 East, New Jersey
(201) 335-1849

SEPTEMBER 1ST
NEW YORK COMIC CON
Skyline Motor Inn
725 10th Ave. at 50th St., New York, NY.,
(201) 335-1849

SEPTEMBER 20, 21, 22
U.K. COMIC ART CON '85
University of London Union,
Central London, England

OCTOBER 19, 20 (Dave & Gerhard)
FALL CON
University Centre Hotel
1535 S.W. Archer Road, Gainesville, FL.,
(904) 374-8593

CEREBUS

NO. 74 MAY 1985

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KAREN McKIEL
Administrator

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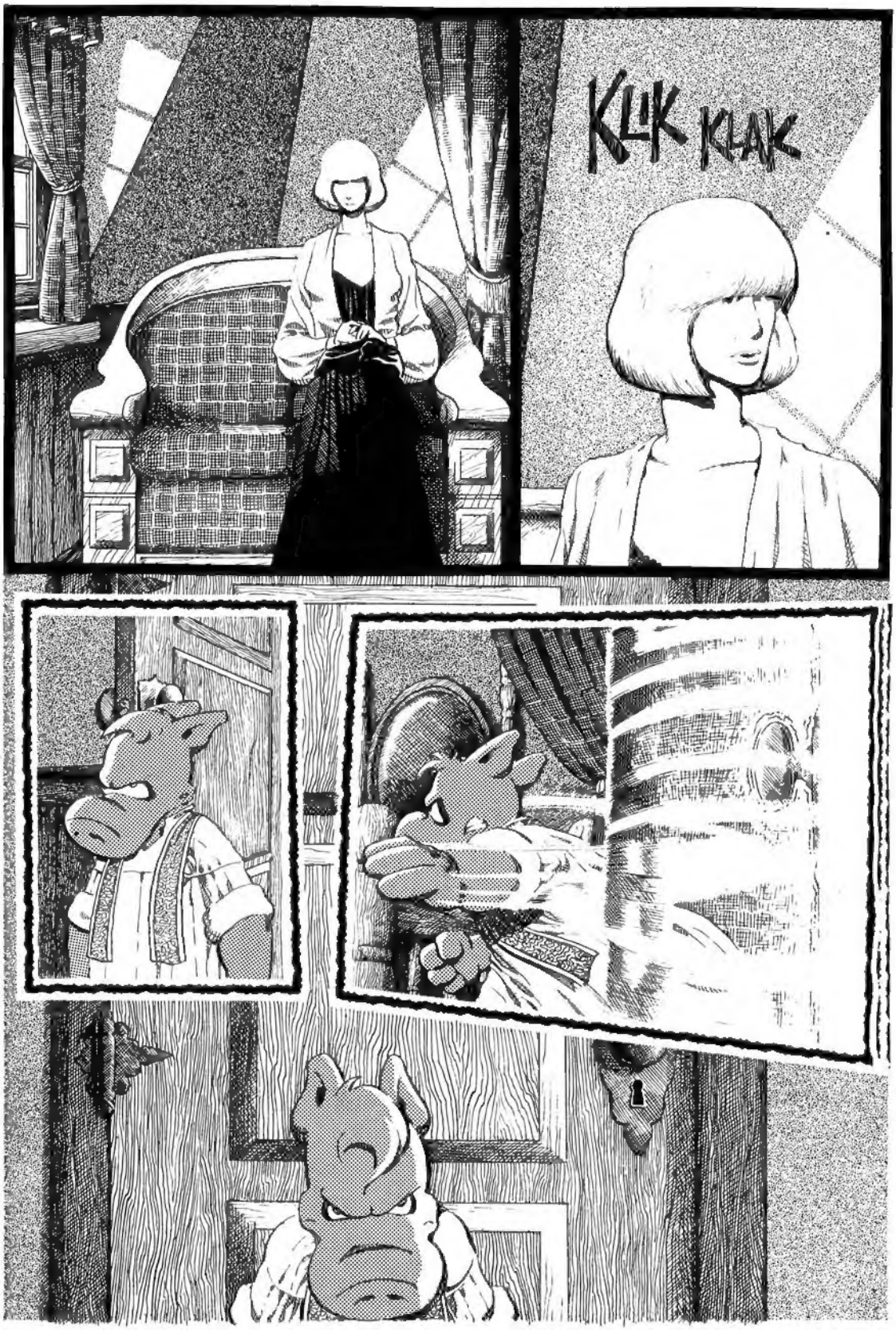
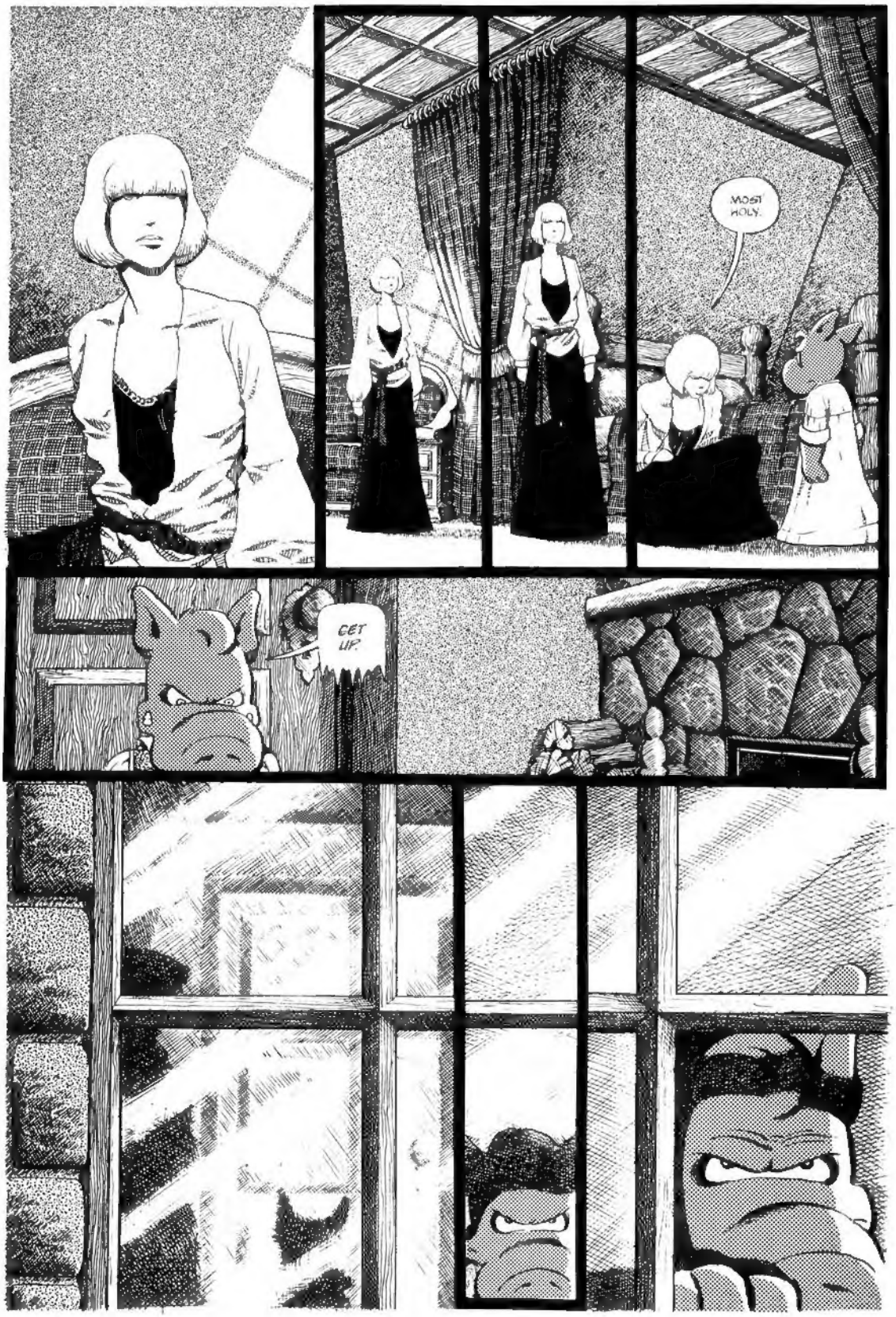
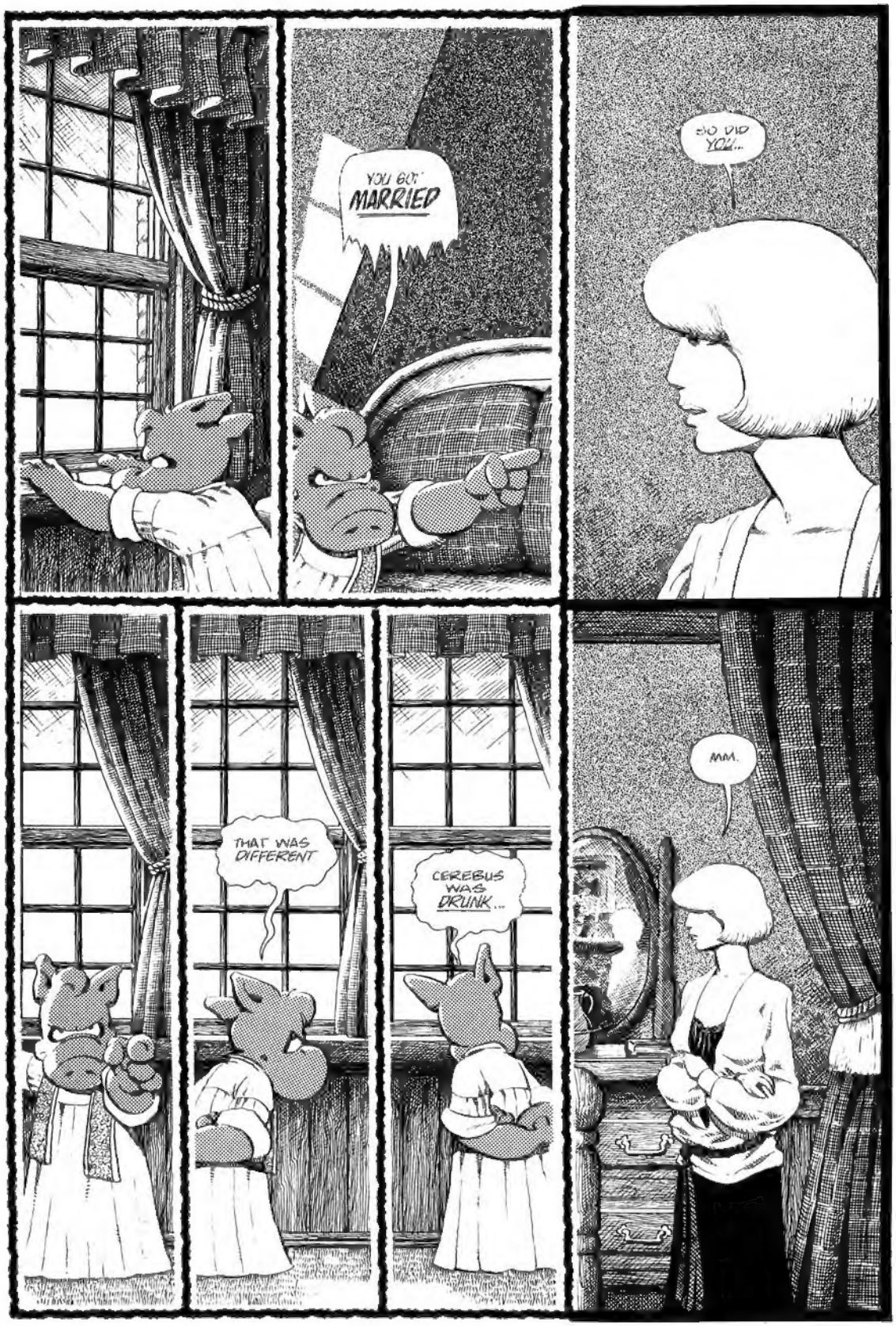
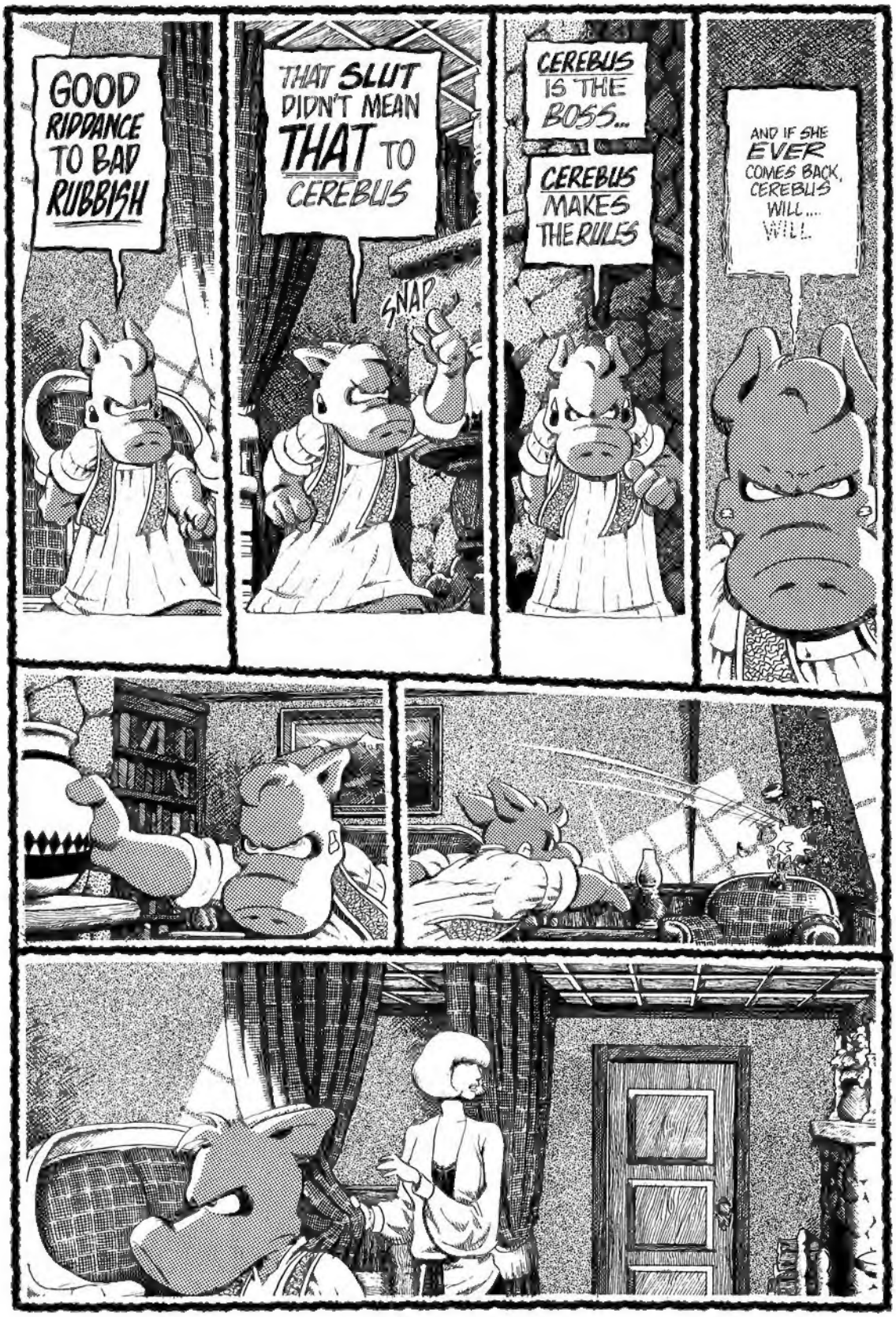
acquired tastes


KLIK KLAK

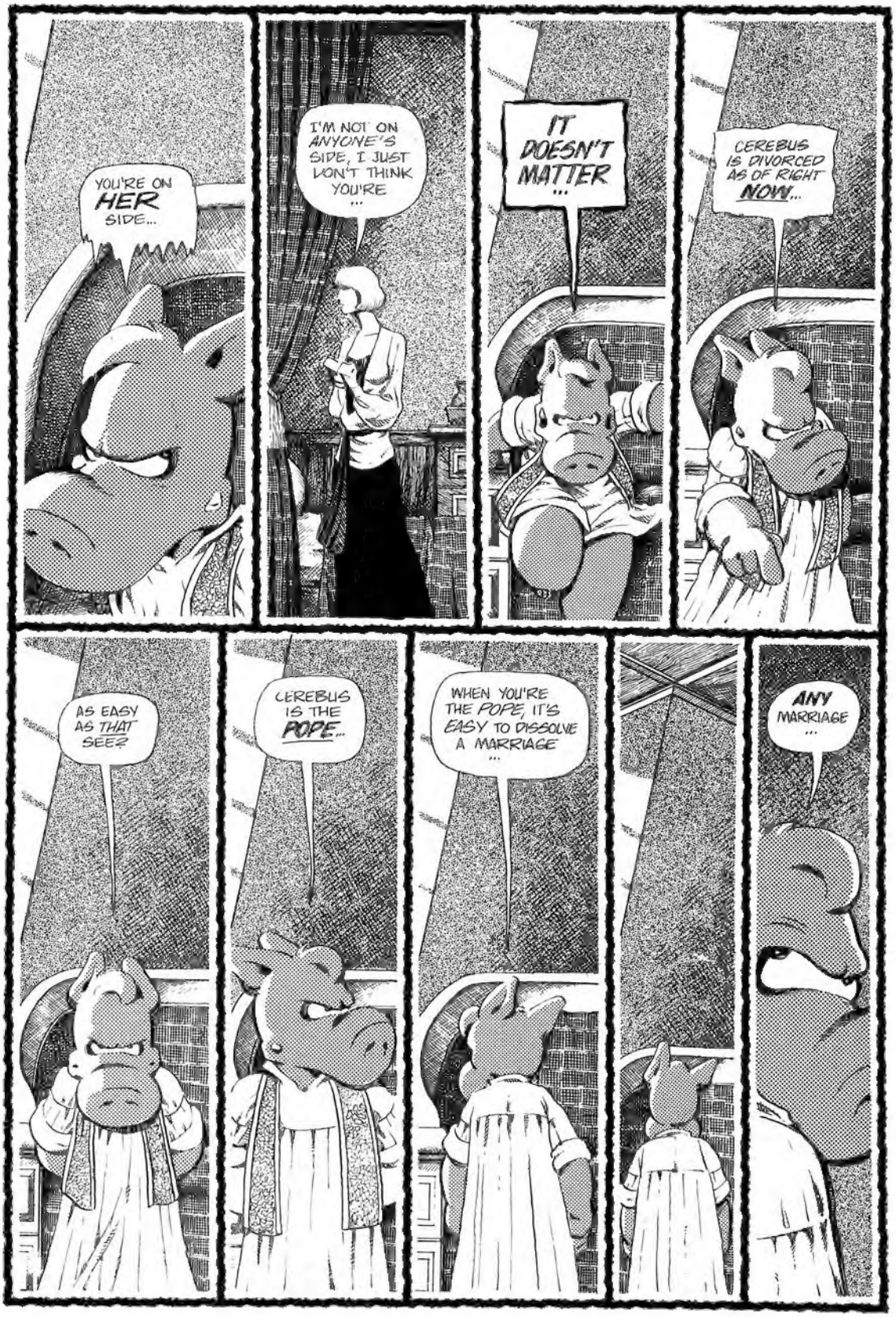

MOST HOLY.
GET UP.

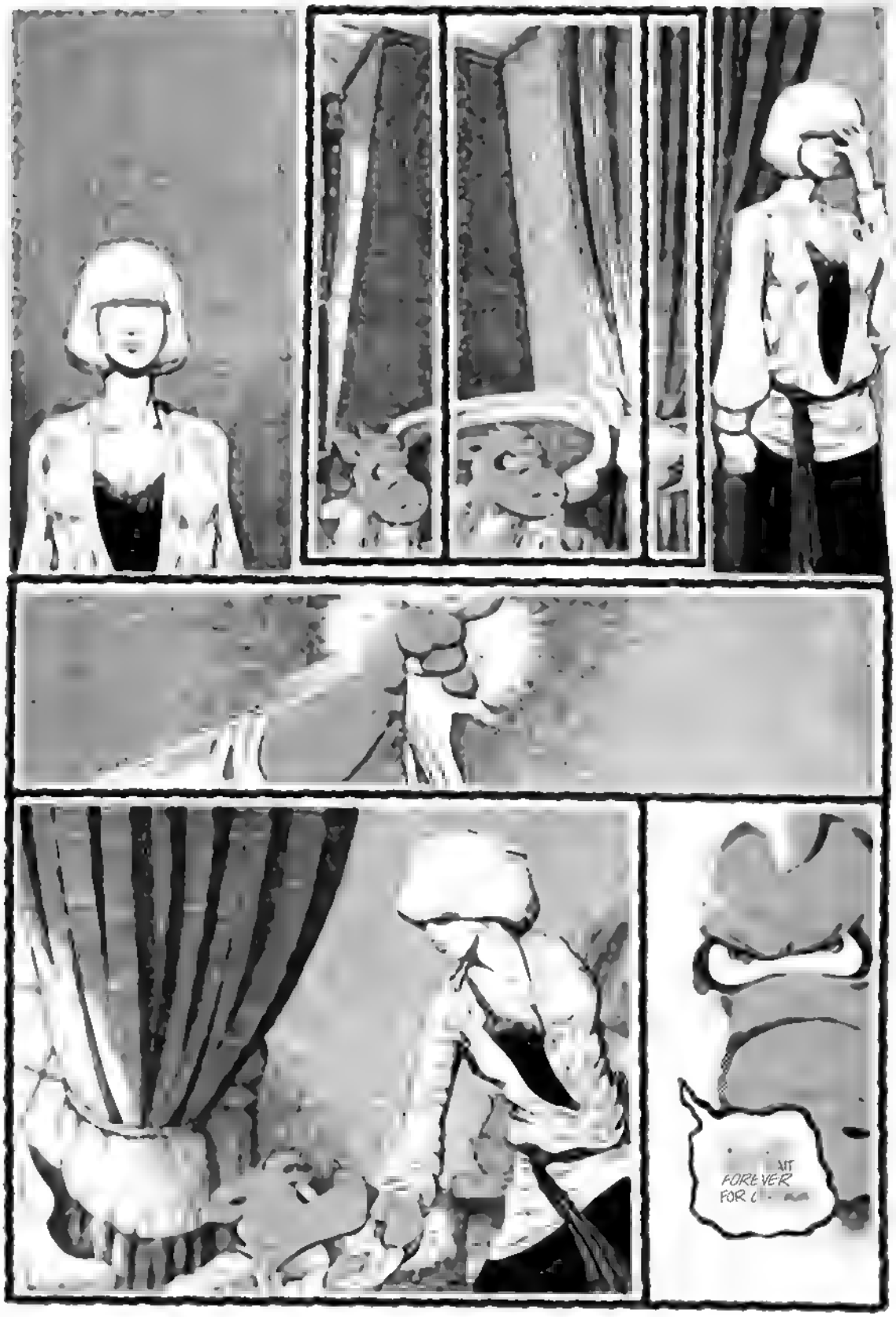

YOU GOT MARRIED
SO DID YOU...
THAT WAS DIFFERENT
CEREBUS WAS DRUNK...
MM.

BESIDES...
SOPHIA
LEFT
CEREBUS
I'M...
...I'M SORRY
I DIDN'T KNOW
WHEN....?
ABOUT AN HOUR AGO
ABOUT AN...
YOU MUST BE---- UPSET...
HA!


GOOD RIDDANCE TO BAD RUBBISH
THAT SLUT DIDN'T MEAN THAT TO CEREBUS
SNAP
CEREBUS IS THE BOSS...
CEREBUS MAKES THE RULES
AND IF SHE EVER COMES BACK, CEREBUS WILL.... WILL
BANG

SHE NEVER CARED ABOUT CEREBUS...
CEREBUS COULD LIVE OR DIE AND IT WOULDN'T MATTER TO THAT SLUT...
OH, I'M SURE SHE MUST HAVE CARED IN SOME ...
THE ONLY REASON SHE MARRIED CEREBUS WAS FREE FOOD, FREE LODGINGS, FREE LAUNDRY FREE EVERYTHING
BUT... IF THAT WAS TRUE, WHY WOULD SHE LEAVE?


YOU'RE ON HER SIDE...
I'M NOT ON ANYONE'S SIDE, I JUST DON'T THINK YOU'RE ...
IT DOESN'T MATTER ...
CEREBUS IS DIVORCED AS OF RIGHT NOW...
AS EASY AS THAT SEE?
CEREBUS IS THE POPE...
WHEN YOU'RE THE POPE, IT'S EASY TO DISSOLVE A MARRIAGE ...
ANY MARRIAGE ...

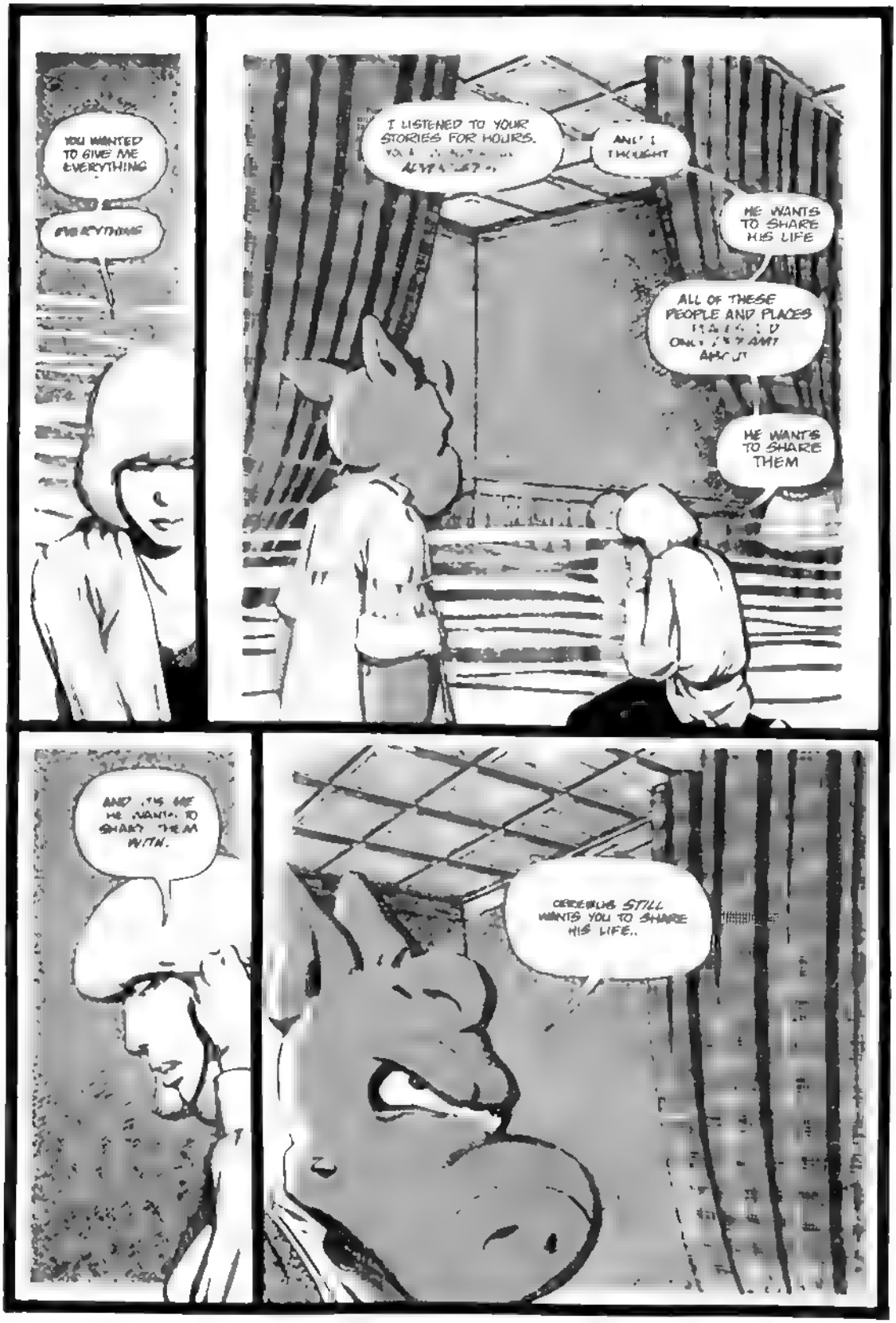

FOREVER

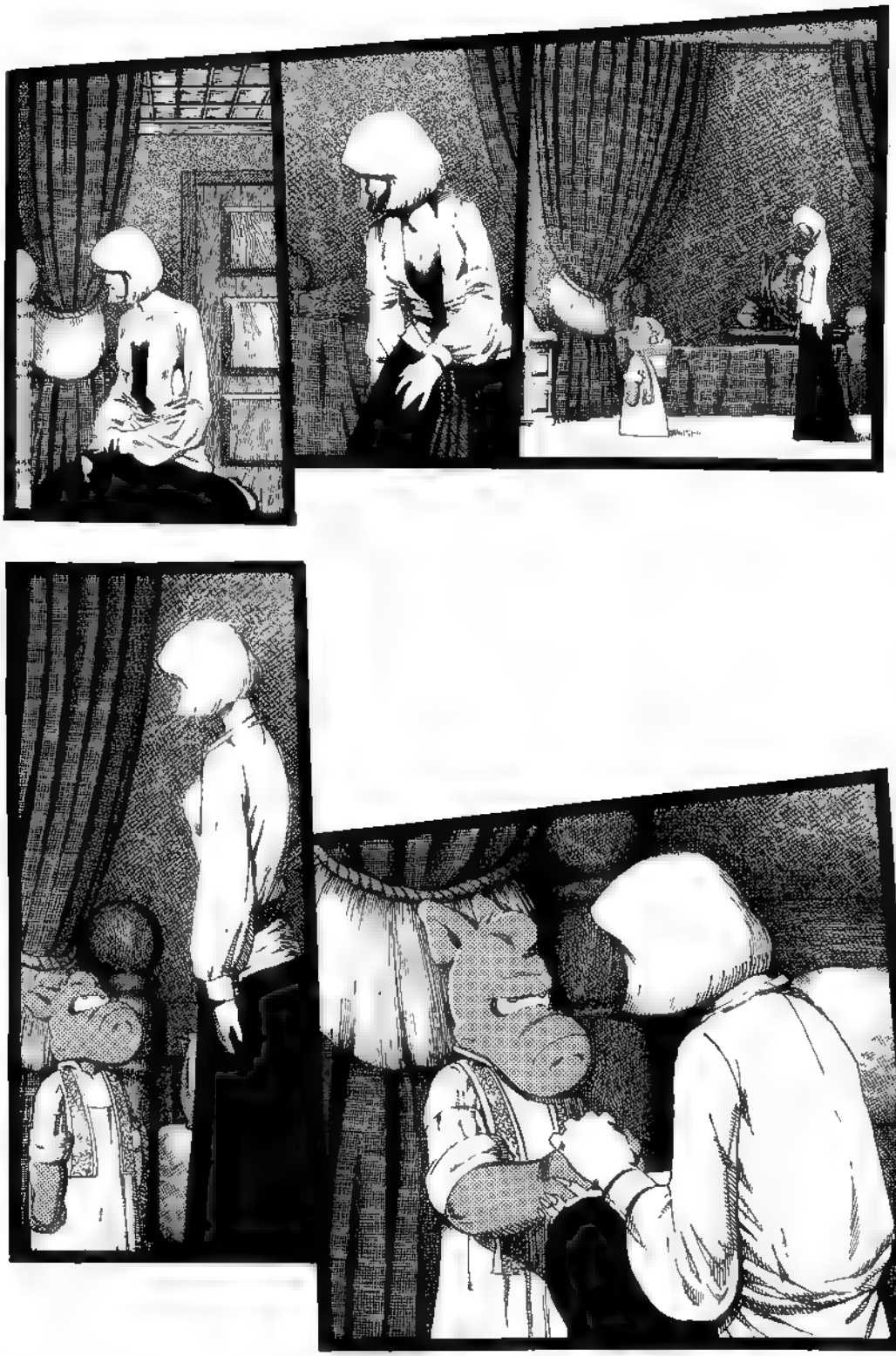
I DIDN'T KNOW
OW!

I SAID I'D WAIT FOREVER FOR YOU TO REMEMBER
WELL YOU DID REMEMBER...
AND YOU NEVER CAME BACK

WHE?
WHEN I FIRST MET YOU .. THAT NIGHT WHEN YOU WALKED UP TO ME
I THOUGHT YOJ WERE A LITTLE BOY

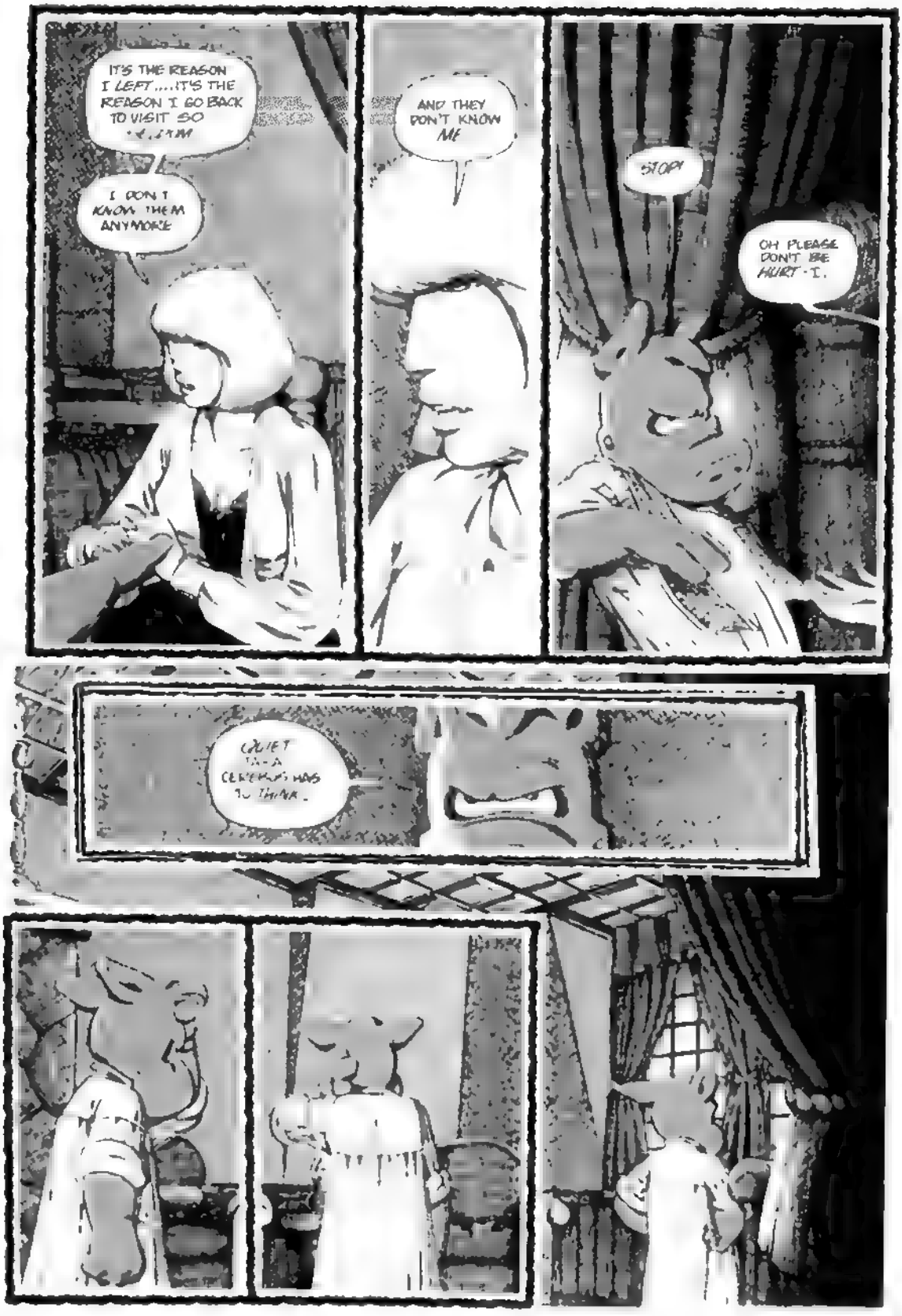
I WAS USING A FAKE NORTHERN ACCENT "JAKA SITS AT NO ONE'S TABLE"
"JAKA WANTS YOU TO BUY HER A.. ..DRINK"
I THOUGHT YOU WERE IMITATING ME ...TRYING TO COPY MY SPEECH..
"CEREBUS WOULD KILL YOU A YAK FOR YOUR SUPPER"
I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE CUTEST THING I EVER SAW

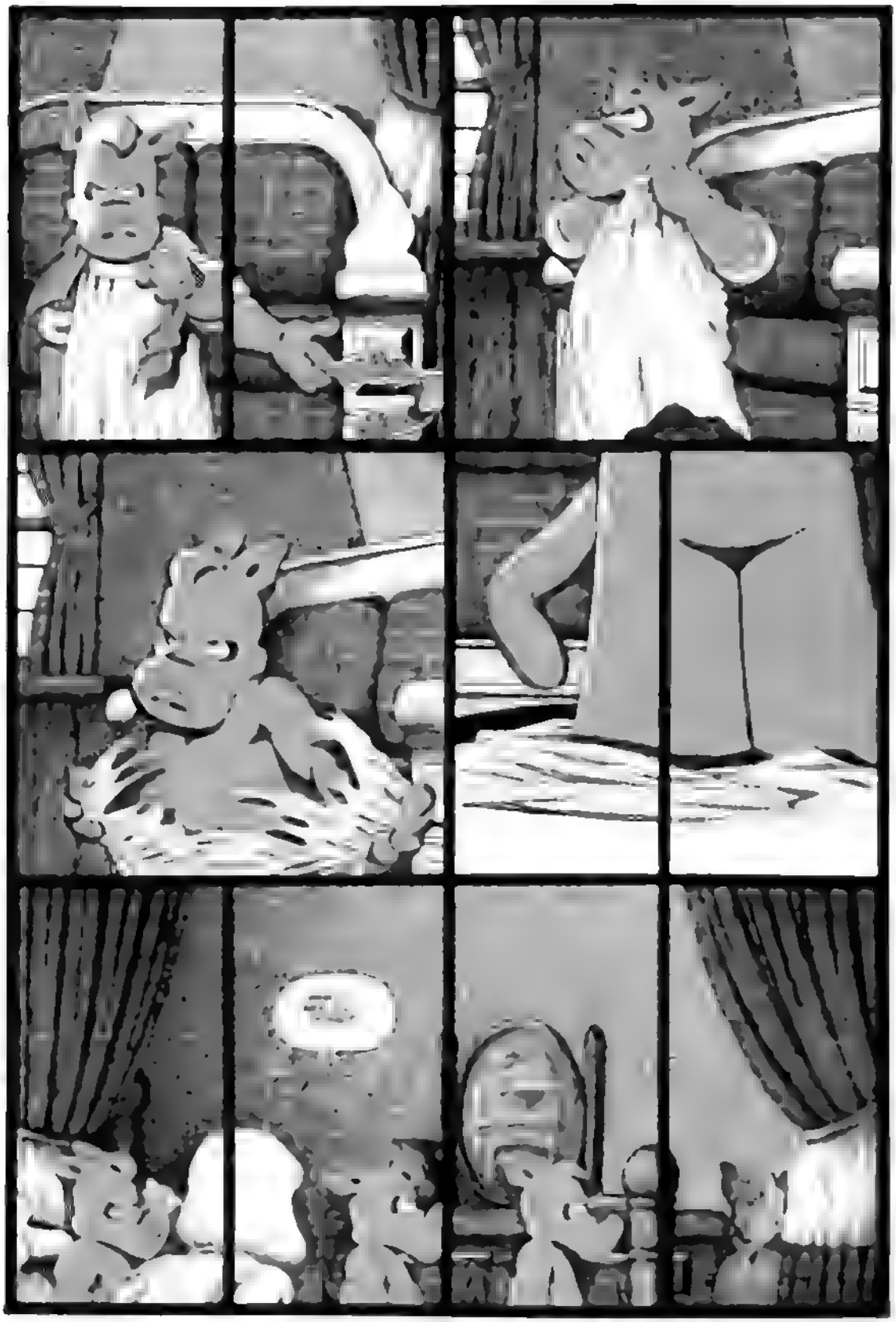

YOU WANTED TO GIVE ME EVERYTHING
EVERYTHING
I LISTENED TO YOUR STORIES FOR HOURS.
AND I THOUGHT
HE WANTS TO SHARE HIS LIFE
ALL OF THESE PEOPLE AND PLACES
HE WANTS TO SHARE THEM
AND THIS IS WHAT HE WANTS TO SHARE THEM WITH.
CERBERUS STILL WANTS YOU TO SHARE HIS LIFE..

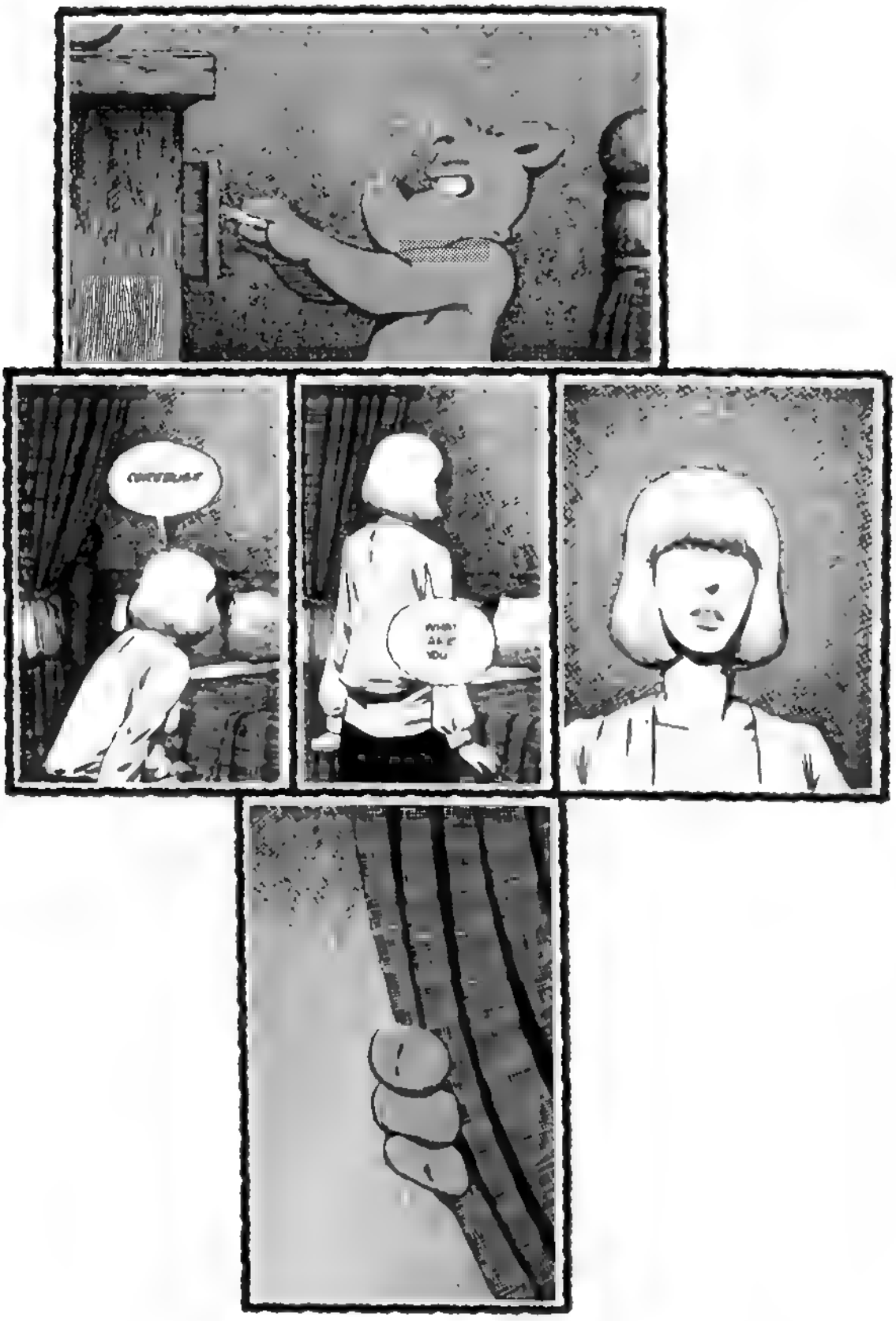


YOUR LIFE IS VERY DIFFERENT NOW...
YOUR POWER AND INFLUENCE IN THE FELDWAR VALLEY IS ALMOST UNIMAGINABLE..
THEY'RE CALLING YOU THE SAVIOUR OF 1EST, YOU KNOW
THE WAY THEY CALLED MY UNCLE THE SAVIOUR OF PALNU..
I LOVE MY UNCLE
I ALWAYS WILL

BUT I CAN'T
I WON'T
LIVE THAT WAY EVER AGAIN.
THE POWER CHANGED HIM. CHANGED SOMETHING VITAL INSIDE HIM.
AND IT WASN'T JUST UNCLE JULIUS
IT WAS EVERYONE AROUND HIM
EVERYONE I KNEW WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL


IT'S THE REASON I LEFT....IT'S THE REASON I GO BACK TO VISIT SO
I DON'T KNOW THEM ANYMORE
AND THEY DON'T KNOW ME
STOP!
OH PLEASE DON'T BE HURT - I.
QUIET I'M A CEREBUS HAS TO THINK.





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AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave,

Who do you think you're fooling? I, for one, caught the reference to the Illuminati on page 7, panel 3, issue 72. And what about the fact that there are 59 bags of gold in the second panel of page 14? C'mon, Dave! Less obvious is the fact that, while the letters on Lord Julius' sword ostensibly stand for "United Feldwar States" or some such tripe, they actually represent "S.F.U." backwards That's right, University of San Francisco. And we all know who went there.

I really appreciate the physics asides, though. When Cerebus refers to "hanging by your hair with hundred pound weights on your ankles" he is clearly implying that the number of weights should be determined by a binary code of radioactive nuclei which may or may not collapse after one minute, according to the laws of quantum mechanics. He is setting her up as a perfect Schrodinger's cat.

Love the book.

May you find your personal Phranim,

Arneas Freagle, Last of the Midnight Scum-runners,
H.C.H.S., New York.

PS - If you really want to banish all traces of Deni, why don't you change the name back to Cerberus?

You overlooked the more significant sequence of sixty-one bags of gold, followed by twelve, followed by twenty-nine. If there's a clearer signal of my personal state of mind while working on #72, I'd like to know about it. I can't believe that all the eagle-eyed Cerebus fans missed this one.

****

Dear Dave,

I can't think of anything to say. In fact, the only reason that I'm in front of this infernal typing machine is because it's Easter vacation and I have nothing better to do than bug you.

I've been doing some thinking in the way of why your letters page covers everything but Cerebus. Maybe it's because everyone is like me and doesn't understand what the hell is going on half the time. Maybe if you explained it all to us the letters page would be flooded with intellectual letters concerning Cerebus, right? Of course not. I can see we'll be talking about Connie Lingus' address, Mortis the DEATHhorse, and Mike's collection of spoiled cottage cheese until the day our nose hairs ignite. On the other hand, where else can we learn about anti-matter aardvarks?

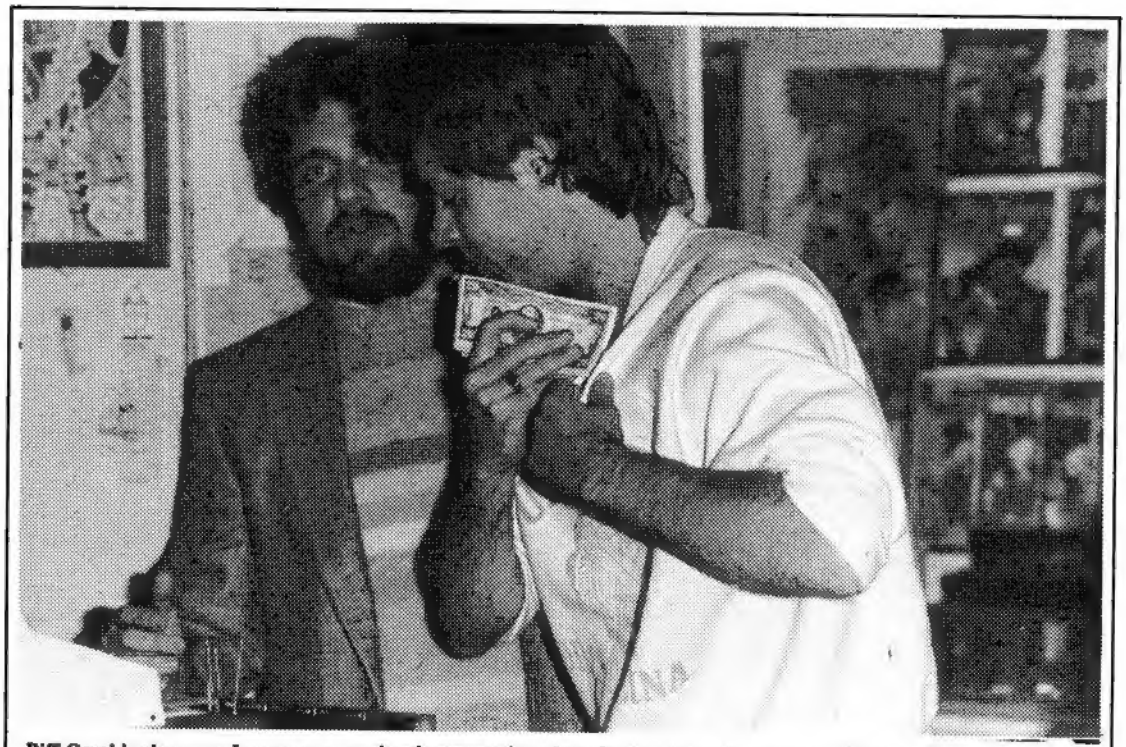
As you can see, I'm a very confused person.

I'm sure many people out there don't understand the letters page half the time This means, Dave, that they are paying $1.70 a month to be confused by either the story or the letters Wow, that's a great way to make money It's been done before though, by Arthur C. Clarke

Hey, how's this for a contest idea. Everyone writes in with a picture of themself included Oh yeah, and some

CONNIE AND HER STUFFED CEREBUS

"Where's Cerebus' tail" asks the divine Ms. Lingus, rhetorically. Hey guys, has this Connie business crossed the border line into bad taste or what? A female drinking buddy of mine ventured the opinion that if I continue to publish these photo's of Connie it would only be fair to print pictures of myself in various stages of undress. I'm not entirely sure I want to be that fair. How about polaroids of Derek and Rob in peek-a-boo lingerie. Or BOB with his disc-drive showing. Let me know.



Biff Orral looks on as I scoop my previously unmentioned professional fee (the day's profits) from the cash register at "Comics 'Nuff Said" in North Carolina. "What'm ah gonna tell Norma?" he whines. "Tell her Shelton took it" I snicker.

money. At random drawing, the winner is chosen to be a character in Cerebus. The picture is used, of course, to get their likeness and the money goes to me for thinking it up. Why do you need a contest?

Just something to do, y'know?

Another suggestion from me to you is to gather up a bunch of comics artists after the CBG awards and sing a song to help those unfortunates that think **Secret Wars** is neat. This one isn't as good because I don't get anything out of it.

While I'm at it, I'll give you two more bonus suggestions;

1) Reprint all the Aardvark Comments in a softback format. Include a new 8-page Mike Bannon letter to attract those who have already read the material. Call the package "Clods of Cerebus." No? I didn't think so.

2) It seems that nearly everyone who writes to you gets a fan club, but not all. Well, I can help. For everyone who **doesn't** have a fan club, I will form one for each and every one of them. There won't be any membership cards, newsletters or bonuses. In fact, the only thing that makes them fan clubs is the fact that there is a membership fee. A big one. Anyone interested? No, I didn't think so.

Whadda you know? I **did** find something to say. I'm proud of myself.

Exit stage left,

Pete Corson Jr.
1109 Gunnison Pl.,
Raleigh, NC., 27609

PS: I have evidence to prove that Mike is really a goat with a surgically implanted moss-green crayon.

"Theirself"?

****

Hi Dave!

After roughly 40 issues with you and Cerebus I wanted to write a letter to let you know how much I still enjoy Cerebus.

I'm a real fan of comic art/you (and Gerhard, of course) do more with black and white than most mainstream comics do with color. I'd like Gerhard to know I think he does a nice job of enhancing your work rather than... changing it as many inkers with a heavy style tend to do. The detail that goes into each panel is really something to see.

The storyline is also intriguing. Marvelously subtle in places and maddeningly (is that a word?) in depth/complex in others. It is an example of what appears to be simplicity on the surface... yet each closer look reveals more intricate designs and interwoven details. Does one look at the forest or the trees? I'm a little embarrassed to admit this, but I didn't realize until issue #71 that Powers was a man. Now we find out he has a dog... and its name is Spike? The panel showing him (Powers) attesting to Spike's qualities... "Spike's a GOOD dog." was both humorous, touching and sympathic to me. Nice job... really nice touch.

I'm not sure I understood your reasons behind choosing DEMLINS as your back-up story. The graphics were well done... maybe I just didn't see the humor.

Well, I am looking forward to 'JAM' and, of course the months/issues to come.

John Dennis
731 N Perry,
Pontiac, MI., 48058

This is an attempt on my part to encourage a few more letters of comment that actually deal with the content of Cerebus. Just in case Connie doesn't send another photo next month.

****

Dear Dave,

Having picked up as my first issue of Cerebus issue #72, I am full-blown, gonzo **confused.** I must admit though, that even though I had no idea what was going on, I was convulsed with laughter. (Being a Roman Catholic definitely helped).

I will have to continue reading

Cerebus so that I can get some idea of the general story-line. What's that I hear about Cerebus Jam being a sort of explanatory handbook for those of us who were late beginners? I sure hope so. Until then, I look forward to the next issue with baited breath.

Sheri Lee Morton
Rt 6, Mt. Tabor Road,
Murfreesboro, TN., 37130

PS: Kudos to "Thorn" for his stunning display of illegal talent!

As you get to know me better, Sheri, you will find that I have virtually no compassion for late beginners. Cerebus Jam will consist of further obfuscation, false trails, teasing misdirection and tom-foolery of all shapes and sizes. But, then, as a Roman Catholic I know you're used to suffering.

Whoever named your town must have been heavy into quaaludes.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

I couldn't believe my eyeballs. It took me a couple of minutes of intense staring to get over that photograph of Connie Lingus in the latest Cerebus. (Cheesecake pictures in Cerebus! Is nothing sacred?) I imagine that this is going to cause quite a scandal.

But I have a funny feeling that this whole Connie business is just a plot on the part of Stu Ballat to get all of us aardvark readers jealous of this extremely beautiful (if somewhat dangerous) girl he apparently has lounging around the house. Well it won't work, Ballat! I'm on to your clever little scheme. I know the truth.

Dale
P.O. Box 1833,
Hiram, Ohio 44234

PS: Okay, so maybe I'm just a little bit jealous. A little bit.

I would imagine someone from Hiram, Ohio would be jealous of just about anyone who wasn't.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Tarim, uh, Dave,

Yeah! I figured it out! I was first! I was first! See, I was thinking of writing another hate letter to you, and I was thinking of commenting on the number of issues that were making my magazine holder bulge, and I'd have to get a new one soon, and the magazine holder kept my old Cerebi from getting ripped when I'm not leafing through ancient issues to find a clue about what's so special about the gold coin, and I thought of the issue way back when Cerebus thinks he found the eye of Terim, and that was it! Because the gold coin is building itself into the real eye of Tarim, or Terim, or whatever, see, and good lord that was one monster of a run-on sentence.

Well, with crossed fingers,

Stefan Osborne
317 Dayton St.,
Yello Springs, OH., 45387

Very good. You've figured out part of it.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

You know what's going to happen, don't you? This Connie Lingus business is going to go on and on until all of us who have even a rumor of androgen in our systems fall in love (or something similar) with her, then Connie is going to come out and admit she's really a guy dressed up in drag, and we'll all feel like a bunch of homos. That's what going to happen.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

Stan Timmons
3604 Valdez Drive,
Lafayette, IN., 47905

PS: Don't feel bad, though... I fell for the same trick with Loni Anderson once.

Only once?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

Have you ever read or seen **Çorky Park**? The reason that I ask is issue number 21, page seven: this scene is very much like the scene in **Gorky Park** where, after uncovering the mutilated bodies, Pribluda (the KGB chief) decides that the case is for the militia, and not KGB. The similarities are... oops, wrong book. This is supposed to go to the American Flagg! Well, you can tell that I've got my priorities straight.

Adolf Hitler
Somewhere in South America

PS: Had you going there for a minute, didn't I?

Why is it that Howard gets all the celebrity mail?

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

Say boy howdy, you know it's been quite a while since I've written to "Aardvark Comment" (actually, I've never written, but it looks like fun), so I'll just throw in some remarks on the past couple of issues.

#71 - If George Bernard Shaw is you, and Mark Twain is Gilbert Shelton, then Herman Melville must be Bill Mantlo. Also, Theodore Dreiser and "Doc" Smith combined make Chris Claremont, if anybody cares.

Forget giving Gerhard a last name. Let's give him a first name. "Marvin Gerhard". Yeah, that sounds real eighties.

#72 - Bad news for Connie Lingus -- Madonna beat you to it. I give her two or three more years on inertia alone. I suggest you wear a suit and tie. And fer God's sake, get out of Pennsylvania. This is getting boring already.

Liked the artwork by "Thorn". I think constructive vandalism is always positive. When do we see the Cerebus/Kilroy crossover?

Also, I'm starting my own fan club, because I don't feel like waiting for someone else to start it. To be eligible for membership, you must be brain-dead and hooked up to life-support machinery. A complete collection of **Rom** isn't required, but would be helpful.

Say Dave, since the letters column is becoming increasingly inbred, why don't you drop it from Cerebus and start a new mag called Aardvark Comment? You could make lotsa bread off egocentric, towheaded goon readers like us.

Yours in racial apathy,

Mark Steven Long
2928 117th Street,
Toledo, OH., 43611

Okay, so it's not exactly an insightful critique, but it's a step in the right direction.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave?

I had this dream the other night. It was July, a few years from now. I was wearing a clingy white ribbed dress. You and I were locked in a comic book store on Staten Island. It was really hot, too. The temperature, I mean.

But seriously, Dave. Tell that Death guy that if he and his old grey mare come around here, Mortis will soon be food for dogs. Besides, if they show up on Stu's doorstep, all they're going to find is a bunch of frat boys and such. Really.

But isn't it funny that Death lives in Connecticut?

Sssssssssss

Connie L.
c/o Stu Ballatt
3423 Race Street,
Phila, PA., 19104

I think it's funny that anyone lives in Connecticut.

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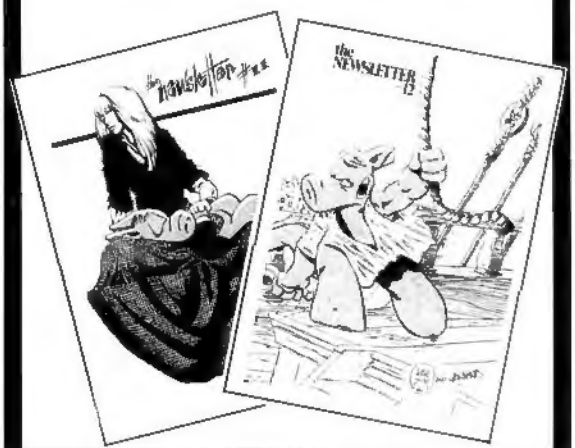

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